

The Baptist Record

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Missionary Rebekah Naylor — Declaring hope in India

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — Rebekah Naylor first saved Rama Gowda's life when she operated on his liver in the Baptist Hospital in Bangalore, India, six years ago. The young boy heard the gospel then but he was a Hindu and would not believe.

As time passed, Rama's illness brought him back to the hospital several times, and each time he heard the gospel.

At age 19, Rama was lying near death from liver failure in the hospital's intensive care unit. Naylor, a Southern Baptist missionary surgeon, visited him there.

"I want to believe in Jesus as the only way to God," he told her. "Will you teach me how to pray?" A few hours later he died.

Naylor, the daughter of Southwestern Seminary President Emeritus Robert Naylor and his wife, Goldia, has served as a surgeon in India 19 years. Southern Baptists have focused on India for their 1992 foreign missions study, and she spoke at Southwestern as part of the

Southern Baptists' Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions Nov. 29-Dec. 5.

Naylor said many Indian people like Rama have heard the gospel through the Bangalore Baptist Hospital. Churches started by those new Christians have sprung up all around Bangalore, she said.

When Naylor first arrived in the predominately Hindu nation with a handful of other missionaries, there were only five churches around Bangalore. Although today she is the only Southern Baptist missionary left in India because of visa restrictions, the denomination's work there continues to have an impact on lives, she said.

"In southern India we now have almost 450 churches because Southern Baptists sent medical

missionaries to share Jesus Christ," she said. "Medical missions was the access to evangelism and church development.

"The priority for me individually, and for our hospital, is to tell people about Jesus. That is why we are there," she said.

Raja Kandanada, an Indian student at Southwestern, said his country desperately needs the message Naylor and the Baptist Hospital proclaim.

"I think there is a lot of darkness in India," Kandanada said. "People seem to be ignorant about spiritual things. Many people have never been told about Christianity. Some of them do not even have any idea.

"Those people are dying — I mean born and dying basically without knowing, and it's hard to think millions of people are dying every day without knowing Christ."

That same burden motivated Southern Baptists to pinpoint India this year for their foreign missions emphasis.

"Missionary hospitals in cultures like India can accomplish more than preaching or teaching. They are very evangelistic, holding services and witnessing at bedsides. Many churches and preaching stations have sprung up as a result of the Bangalore hospital."

— John McGraw, volunteer



physician-missionary from Laurel, upon returning from two-week mission trip to Bangalore in 1990

Naylor believes the attention given to India this year will pay countless benefits for mission work in the country.

"That prayer support is important, because that is the only way that I probably survive," Naylor said. "As our Indian Christians really seek to win their country to Christ, though we perhaps cannot send missionaries because of the visas, we can just work right along side with those Indian Christians as we pray for them."

Chaplains at Bangalore hospital "hold Jesus' hand"

By Michael Chute

BANGALORE, India (BP) — Masked Hindu men waited near the bus stop on the dusty road. One clasped a rusty chain in calloused hands. Another clutched a wooden club at his side. Still others carried large rocks in clenched fists.

The men knew a chaplain from the Baptist hospital would come. The chaplains always visit outpatients in villages dotting the countryside around Bangalore. Hindus fear the chaplains will convert villagers to Christianity. This time, the Hindu zealots followed up earlier threats.

Chaplain G.S. Gangaiah arrived on a bus. Before he could react, the men were upon him, pushing aside his wife, Elizabeth. They knew Gangaiah. He grew up in another Hindu village not far away. When he took a security post at the Baptist hospital, his parents didn't talk to him for months. When he became a Christian, they kicked him out.

This day, the zealots meant to murder Gangaiah. The club-wielding man hammered his knees. One with chains lashed the chaplain's back and arms. Others stoned him as he withered helplessly on the ground.

The savagery went on for five minutes. Elizabeth could only scream for help. None came. Finally, she agreed to take her husband and never return. The beating stopped.

Blood gushed from Gangaiah's wounds, staining light clothes a deep red. Elizabeth half-carried, half-dragged her husband back to the bus stop. Hindu men taunted their every step. The hour-long ride back to Bangalore was nearly as tortuous as the beating. Gangaiah slipped in and out of consciousness.

When orderlies carried him into the hospital's emergency room, he was delirious, coughing up blood. Infection had already set in. His fever shot up to 107 degrees. Doctors packed his bruised body in ice to bring down the swelling and fever. Gangaiah slipped in and out of a coma.

Over the next agonizing days, Elizabeth prayed constantly — with Gangaiah during rare moments of semi-consciousness, by herself when he slept. Not a single member of his family came to visit. They considered him already dead since he had accepted Christ as Savior. But members of his Baptist church and Christian friends on the hospital staff maintained a vigil with Elizabeth.

When he finally could speak, Gangaiah told friends how he had prayed in his mind: "Lord, help me. Please heal my legs. I want to preach the gospel. Let me walk again.

"God told me very clearly he would not leave me," Gangaiah recounts. "I held Jesus' hand with my hand. I knew I wasn't going to die."

Fully recovered now, Gangaiah has rejoined Elizabeth as hospital chaplain reaching out into the vil-



FEARLESS PAIR — Elizabeth and G.S. Gangaiah lead prayer for people in the village of Chanahalli. As chaplains, the pair work out of Baptists' Bangalore Hospital, which Southern Baptists opened in 1973. Once Hindu zealots beat Gangaiah with chains, stones, and clubs, but he miraculously survived the attack. Gangaiah and Elizabeth lead Bible studies among hospital outpatients in villages surrounding Bangalore. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

lages. Still fearless, they have avoided a repeat of that terrible beating five years ago. Every weekday they visit hospital outpatients and lead Bible studies. Saturdays they report progress to the head of the hospital's pastoral care department, Anthony Jacob. Another couple has a similar schedule but works exclusively in Bangalore city.

Gangaiah and Elizabeth are both products of that evangelistic outreach. Gangaiah met the chaplains in 1980 when he first came to work in the hospital. Jacob told Gangaiah about Jesus — the first time anyone had shared God's love with him. He heard John 3:16 for the first time and believed.

"Jacob gave me a Bible, but I just stared at it," Gangaiah recalls. "I couldn't read. I planned to give it back. But a small voice — it was God's voice because nobody else was there — said: 'I will give you a mind to read and understand this book.' I kept it. I slowly learned to read by studying the Bible."

After his family threw him out, Gangaiah went to the hospital with just his Bible and a blanket. David Travis, then a missionary to India, heard his story and offered him a place to stay. There he met Elizabeth, a Christian who helped care for the Travises' two small children. They married two years later,

despite his family's opposition.

The couple quickly proved themselves as Christian workers. Elizabeth visited people and shared her faith every chance she got. Soon, the India Baptist Mission (now Society) hired her as "Bible woman" to work in the churches. Hospital officials saw how Gangaiah openly shared his faith with fellow workers and patients. They soon asked him to work as a chaplain.

Later, missionaries sent the couple to a nearby Bible school for more training. In 1985 Elizabeth joined her husband in the hospital's outreach program. Starting work in new villages has been difficult, but they carry on and God sees them through, they explain. Most villages receive the couple well and have a high regard for them.

That was the pattern with Gangaiah's family too. Now, both his father and mother have accepted Christ.

The Indian government's policy of limiting missionary visas has forced many foreign Christian workers out of the country. But missionaries have left the work with Indian Baptists like Gangaiah and Elizabeth.

"Both of us are serving the Lord Jesus," Gangaiah says. His wife quickly adds: "For God's glory."

Chute writes for FMB.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

Speak to the age out of eternity

Like a pot-holed highway 1993 stretches before us; 365 gleaming days of hope, but we can only see one day at a time. We seldom see many of our readers but you are appreciated even when you send us poetry. Many poems are still received and rest assured that Mississippi has its share of poets. Some are good, others have just discovered they can make two words rhyme. It hurts when we have to reject poems but we simply do not have the space. Even so, I realize some sensitive gifted souls express their feelings best in the haunting words of poetry. I apologize to them. James Russell Lowell didn't help my situation at all when he wrote:

"I believe the poets: it is they
who utter wisdom from the central deep
And, listening to the inner flow of things,
Speak to the age out of eternity."

Poets have a way of speaking that lingers, inspires, and is a real balm to the wounded soul. Many of our beloved hymns were poetry long before being set to music.

Moreover, the poetic books of the Bible are where we turn so often when we walk in the valley:

"When you pass through the waters, I will be
with you
And through the rivers, they shall not overflow
you.
When you walk through the fire, you shall not
be burned,
Nor shall the flame scorch you" (Isaiah 43:2).

The Bible is the greatest book of poetry ever written. It ever inspires, comforts, and challenges the people of God.

Joyce Kilmer puts our feeble effort in the right perspective declaring: "Poems are made by fools like me,

Guest opinion...

A plea for reclamation of SBC

By W. Levon Moore

Webster defines the word "reclaim" as "to rescue or bring back." The burden of this statement is a plea for the reclamation of the Southern Baptist Convention. This is not a plea for continued struggle and conflict between fundamentalists and moderates within a conservative denomination. Rather, it is an appeal to committed Christians from all sides of the spectrum of theological diversity to recognize that in winning our individual battles, all of us are losing the war.

Much has been said about the need to restore some of the distinctions which formerly characterized Southern Baptists. However, little has been said about how this restoration may take place. The time has come to focus attention upon some principles and processes of reclamation. Whether the change which has occurred over the past few years has been a doctrinal cleansing and a return to basic biblical truths, as is perceived by some; or whether it has been a power struggle and a political/religious take-over, as avowed by others, is now beside the point.

History will, no doubt, judge that there have been gains and losses, hurts and helps, negatives and positives resulting from these struggles. What is important now is to seek those processes to which all of us, from far left to far right, must commit ourselves in order to preserve the best that is left of a great denomination.

No system can be effectively, or drastically, changed by critics on the outside. But, any system can ultimately be modified from the inside, providing a nucleus of its constituents are committed to well-defined objectives and goals designed to alter ideas and opinions, and if these constituents persistently press for new directions.

The process of change which we have recently witnessed in Southern Baptist life began with a strong desire for change within the structure. This was followed by the recruitment of like-minded followers through the re-orientation, or re-structuring, of individual minds. This process of concept-alteration has involved the taking of commonly accepted doctrinal concepts relating to the Bible, the church,

the ministry, and the denomination, and gradually changing interpretations of these concepts.

While many among us denounce the process used so successfully to divide us into politico/religious parties, resulting in confusion, mistrust, disillusionment, obscurity of priorities, deterioration, and fragmentation, all would do well to recognize the principle upon which this process was based. That principle is that change must come from within the system. Having recognized this, we need to call to the forefront strong leaders, not for the purpose of adopting new agendas leading to further political struggle, but who will humbly commit themselves to well-defined purposes and goals designed to alter ideas and concepts. With courageous persistence, this host of leaders must work to modify the concepts of fellow Southern Baptists who have been led away from the principles and interpretations of our Baptist forefathers.

Committed pastors, deacons, Sunday School teachers, and other leaders within the churches and (See RECLAMATION on page 9)

but only God can make a tree." Several years ago Argentine Baptists gave me a leather bound copy of Jose' Hernandez treasured book. He was Argentina's national poet. He writes of his El Gaucho, Martin Fierro, saying,

"And every man, life teaches him,
The things that a man should know.—
The jolts of trouble and knocks of faith
Will teach him wisdom soon or late
For nothing can teach a man so much,
As the bitter cup of woe."

We always learn more at Gethsemane than we do at the wedding feast. Rudyard Kipling has been my favorite writer since I went to the Far East and discovered:

"And the end of the fight is a tombstone white,
With the name of the late deceased,
And the epitaph drear; a fool lies here,
Who tried to hustle the East."

Of course, he is best known perhaps for the "Recessional:"

"Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget — lest we forget."

Hopefully you can understand, dear poets, that I applaud you. I encourage you and I regret the Baptist Record does not have space for your poems. One of our Magnolia state writers, Wilda Fancher in "I Have Heard the Rainbow" said, "Just as the size of the rain drops affect the amount of each color in the rainbow, just so does the intensity of an experience affect what I hear of God's greatness, goodness, love, power, and other traits. These makings of a rainbow are always in existence, and when I listen, I can hear the rainbow." So, in 1993, keep writing, keep listening; rainbows are being made.

A FRESH SPAN OF MONTHS



Companionship

Recently a Jackson woman and her 22 dogs were evicted from a rental house. The dogs were taken to the city dog pound and the lady took to the streets. Apparently the poor woman was unable to say "no" to every mutt that came along. Dogs provide great companionship, but 22 would provide a few things other than friendship. Running your own private dog pound is frowned upon by local landlords.

Dogs are often mentioned in Scripture but seldom in a favorable light. The giant, Goliath, said to David, "Am I a dog" (1 Sam. 17:43); and the psalmist declared wicked transgressors to be growling like a dog, seeking food, and howling if not satisfied (Psalm 59).

We had our share of canine attraction when I was a lad, but Moma would never permit us to keep a dog in the house. She never craved canine companionship. I suppose 11 children provided about all the companionship she needed. Even when I was grown and married, Moma could visit us and our little cocker spaniel would cuddle up, wagging what was left of his tail. Moma would nod but never speak. This in spite of Matthew 15:27, likely referring to house dogs.

She also had some strange theology about buying and selling dogs and would never allow us that eco-

nomic enjoyment. She often quoted Deuteronomy 23:18, declaring that a man shall not carry the worth of a dog to the Lord's house. The fact that this referred to something else never deterred Moma. She was not one to let truth interfere with her theology. She would have certainly said "Amen" to Irene MacLeod's "Lone Dog."

"I'm a lean dog, a keen dog,
a wild dog and lone;
I'm a rough dog, a tough dog,
hunting on my own;
I'm a bad dog, a mad dog,
teasing silly sheep,
I love to set and bay the moon,
to keep fat souls from sleep."

Often we would quote stories of brave dogs saving a life or leading a blind person.

"They are all right in their place" would be Moma's only comment. It took Mark Twain, who could see cloudier on a clear day than most men, to put it in the proper perspective: "If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you. That is the principal difference between a dog and a man."

Anyhow, to justify this dogged diatribe, if you desire companionship, try reading the Baptist Record. Learn of missions in our world, activities in our state, and the fast-moving events of the Southern Baptist Convention. It's one of the better buys in religious news. — GH

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Circulation Manager Renee Walley
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Proofreader/Secretary Shannon Simpson
Editor Emeritus Don McGregor

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N.O. Seminary names V.P., faculty members

NEW ORLEANS (BP)—New Orleans Seminary trustees elected a new vice president and two new faculty members, and announced three administrative changes during the December meeting of the executive committee. Each position is effective Jan. 1.

Asa R. Sphar III was named assistant professor of psychology and counseling in the division of pastoral ministries. Founder of Abundant Resources Counseling Center in New Orleans and Houma, La., Sphar has been active in individual, marriage, and family counseling in the New Orleans area since 1987, and a contract teacher for the seminary since September 1992.

Argile A. Smith, pastor of Trinity Heights Church, Shreveport, La., was named assistant professor of preaching, also in the division of pastoral ministries.

A native of Poplarville, Miss., Smith received degrees from William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary. He has been an adjunct professor at the seminary's Shreveport extension center since 1989.

Smith was also pastor of three Mississippi churches: Pachuta Church; Summerland Church, Taylorsville; and First Church of Lyman, Gulfport.

Mark R. Foley was named vice president for student development

and director of testing. A member of the seminary staff since 1987, Foley began service as a development officer. In 1988 he was named director of the office of financial aid and student development; in 1991 he was named director of the student relations office.

The seminary also announced three administrative changes. Jimmy W. Dukes was named assistant provost and Don H. Stewart as full-time director of the doctor of ministry degree program, both effective immediately. Paul E. Gregoire Jr. assumes the responsibilities of registrar and director of admissions Jan. 1.

Dukes, who was appointed academic dean of the undergraduate faculty in July, was named registrar and director of admissions in 1991. He has been an associate professor of New Testament and Greek at the seminary since 1984. A native of Jackson, Miss., he was named director of the seminary's School of Christian Training in 1990. All of the seminary's undergraduate-level work has been conducted through the School of Christian Training since its founding in 1976.

A native of Hattiesburg, Miss., Stewart has over 30 years of pastoral experience. He received degrees from William Carey College and New Orleans Seminary.

SBC seminary enrollment increases over 1991 total

By Betty R. Kemp

NASHVILLE (BP)—Fall 1992 enrollment for Southern Baptist seminaries totaled 10,551, with most showing an increase.

Enrollment reports from the seminaries appear below in alphabetical order:

— GOLDEN GATE Seminary has a total of 859 students for 1992 fall term, roughly equal to last year's total. Enrollment at the seminary's campuses was Mill Valley, 399; Brea (southern California), 144; Portland, Ore., 48; Ethnic Learning Development Centers (a cooperative venture between the seminary and the Home Mission Board), 268.

Among Golden Gate's master of divinity students: Randi Lansky, who was raised in a conservative Jewish home, ran away at a young age and, after experimenting with several other religions, including Taoism, accepted Christ. She also works with single adults at Tiburon Church near the Mill Valley campus.

(Among the seminary's 1991 graduates: Joe Garfield, a self-described former drug dealer now serving as pastor of First Filipino Church in Berkeley, Calif., and Marcel Taflinger who, while in seminary, traveled around the world sharing Christ, logging an estimated 50,000 miles.)

— MIDWESTERN Seminary's fall enrollment is 472 compared to

463 students in 1991. (The seminary graduated its 2,000th student in 1988.)

— NEW ORLEANS Seminary's fall semester cumulative enrollment is 3,311 at the main campus and at 11 centers in five states and Puerto Rico. The overall enrollment is a 27% increase over last year.

NOBTS, the first Southern Baptist seminary to be founded by direct action of the SBC in 1917 in New Orleans, this year is celebrating its 75th anniversary. The school was known as Baptist Bible Institute until 1975.

NOBTS has extension center campuses in Jackson, Miss.; Miami, Graceville, Orlando, Ft. Myers, and Tampa, Fla.; Shreveport, La.; Birmingham and Boaz, Ala.; Marietta, Ga.; and Guayabo, Puerto Rico. Students are able to work toward associate and master's degrees at these locations.

— SOUTHEASTERN Seminary Fall enrollment increased despite the seminary's probationary status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

"We are pleased and encouraged. Not only is enrollment up to 628, but we have 153 new students, with many transferring from other institutions," said Sheldon Alexander, Southeastern's registrar.

(See SEMINARY on page 8)

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Published Since 1877

Southern trustees reject plan to fund Simmons' departure

By James E. Dotson

ATLANTA (BP)—Southern Seminary trustees, meeting behind closed doors in a called meeting in Atlanta Dec. 15, voted against a proposal to offer controversial ethics professor Paul Simmons up to \$362,000 to terminate his relationship with the seminary.

The board debated for four hours in executive session before voting 34-21 against a motion to offer the severance package.

Trustee chairman W. Wayne Allen, a Cordova, Tenn., pastor, declined all comment on the meeting and the discussion, other than to release a copy of the motion under consideration.

The motion would have empowered seminary President Roy Honeycutt to negotiate "the conclusion" of Simmons' relationship to the seminary "at a cost to the semi-

nary approximating Paul Simmons' compensation through age 62 (not to exceed \$362,000)." Simmons, 56, is professor of Christian ethics at Southern Seminary.

The meeting was the latest attempt by trustees to deal with recurring controversy over Simmons, who has come under fire from conservative trustees for his recent support of abortion rights and homosexuality views. He is a tenured professor, which means he could be fired only for heresy (teachings in violation of the seminary's Abstract of Principles doctrinal statement) or for violating his contract.

According to trustee sources quoted by Associated Baptist Press, trustees earlier had rejected a severance package negotiated by Honeycutt estimated at up to

\$650,000. Some trustees reportedly believe formal dismissal hearings would allow the conflict to continue and possibly taint the administration of the next president at the seminary. Honeycutt has announced his retirement effective Dec. 31, 1993.

Other trustees said they would prefer to seek dismissal through formal heresy charges.

Several trustees said they had been asked not to comment on the details of the Dec. 15 debate.

When asked about the cost of the called meeting, Honeycutt said he did not know the exact figure but that expenses for regular trustee meetings at the Louisville, Ky., campus usually come to about \$30,000 to \$35,000.

Dotson is associate editor, Georgia CHRISTIAN INDEX.

Restaurant, church team up to minister to Columbia youth

By Chip Alford

COLUMBIA, Miss. (BP)—With a menu that includes burgers, fries, shakes, and "the best hot fudge cake in town," it's no surprise The Deck is a popular hangout for teenagers in the small, quiet city of Columbia.

Restaurant owners Joan and Waddell Stewart don't even mind if the teens gather to talk in the parking lot as long as they don't block traffic.

Don Lum, minister of youth and activities at First Church of

Columbia, is a frequent customer at the restaurant himself, and he saw its appeal to youth as an opportunity for ministry.

Lum had been using the "24-Hour Counselor"—a series of (See RESTAURANT on page 8)



COLUMBIA — Benji Lott, a senior at Columbia Academy in Columbia, Miss., checks out a display of counseling tapes at The Deck, a local restaurant popular with teenagers. The restaurant owners have teamed up

with First Church of Columbia to provide the tapes as a ministry to local youths and their parents. (Photo by Jim Veneman)



Families receive disaster relief

Families of the Topeka Church in Lawrence County, whose homes were destroyed in August by a tornado are grateful for the aid received from the disaster relief fund of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. Pictured, Mike Reid, pastor, rejoices with Earnestine Boyd, Lillian Fontenot, and Nikki and Wayne Bourn.

Southern Baptist Foundation '92 assets show large increase

NASHVILLE (BP) — Assets managed by the Foundation in fiscal year 1992 grew 22.2% over the previous year, trustees of the SBC agency were told in annual meeting in Nashville Dec. 1-2.

According to reports given by President Hollis E. Johnson III the principal assets total grew to \$156,550,710, an increase of \$28,468,506 over fiscal year 1991.

WMU slates GA/Acteen Days at Mississippi Baptist colleges

GAs and Acteens will have an opportunity in 1993 to attend GA/Acteen Days at our state Baptist colleges, sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) in Mississippi. GA/Acteen Days will be held at William Carey College in January, Mississippi College in February, and Blue Mountain College in November.

The date for GA/Acteen Day at William Carey College in Hattiesburg is Saturday, Jan. 23. Activities will begin at 3 p.m. in the Carey gymnasium with music, missionary speakers, testimonies from the Carey Lady Crusaders basketball players, and introduction of the cheerleaders.

After the program, all GAs and Acteens will have supper, then attend the Lady Crusader basketball game against Louisiana College at 5 p.m. GA/Acteen Day will conclude with the end of the ball game about 7 p.m.

GA/Acteen Day at William Carey College is for girls in grades 1-12 and their leaders. Cost is \$7.50 per person, which includes the program, supper, and ball game. Registration deadline is Monday, January 18. (no refunds after Wednesday, January 20). Registration forms are being mailed to GA and Acteen leaders in Mississippi.

GA/Acteen Day at Mississippi College in Clinton will be held on Saturday, February 20, and at Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain Saturday, Nov. 13. Details on those two meetings will be released later.

Johnson said assets have grown at a compound annual rate of 20.5% during the past five years.

Income produced for Baptist institutions, agencies, foundations, and individuals increased \$702,058 over the previous year to a record \$9,218,147. The 8.2% increase, Johnson told trustees, was due to the "substantial increase in assets under management."

For more information or to request a registration form, contact the WMU Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800.

Book about Yazoo City native Owen Cooper will go national

By Don McGregor

JACKSON, Miss. (BP) — The Thought Occurred to Me is a book about Owen Cooper, who was never appointed by a mission board but, otherwise, was a Southern Baptist missionary in every sense of the word. Providing his own sustenance through secular agriculture-related pursuits, he spent much of his considerable ability and energy carrying out missions endeavors.

His field was the world.

Cooper was the last layman to serve as Southern Baptist Convention president. Elected 20 years ago in Philadelphia, he presided over SBC sessions in 1973 and 1974 in Portland, Oregon, and Dallas.

During those years he was the one who conceived the original idea for Bold Mission Thrust and was the driving force behind the initiation of the worldwide Southern Baptist missions emphasis.

He was chairman of the SBC Executive Committee and a member of the committee 21 years, longer than anyone else has ever been. He also was president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, chairman of the Mississippi Christian Action Commission, moderator of his Baptist association and chairman of trustees for New Orleans Seminary. He was founder and president of the Pan American Union of Baptist Men, vice president of the Baptist World Alliance and secretary of the BWA Men's Department.

In 1985 he was named layman of the century among Mississippi Baptists. He died the next year as he had lived — trying to get others to help themselves and, in turn, help those about them. From his deathbed he inspired the beginning of construction of a major four-lane highway program in Mississippi. It is under way at this time.

In November, the Baptist Book Store in Jackson became the book's national distribution center to get it into circulation in Baptist Book Stores across the South.

Despite his driving interest in missions, his last secretary, Martha Grayson, recalled, "He had few really close friends. He didn't have time to get close to a lot of people because he was always moving on to something else."

She added, "Many people were in awe of him — scared to approach him — they couldn't get close enough to him to know about his sense of humor."

Sue Tatum, his longtime assistant, recounted that he answered his own phone when he was in his office.

Another of his innovations, Books for the World, ships mission books each year to Third-World countries. Sent free of charge, the books are worth \$18 million.

Two of those who went to work for him — in sales and administration — were Jerry Clower and Gene Triggs. Clower noted he never would have been a success

in show business if it hadn't been for the understanding and backing of Cooper, who kept him on the payroll until he was well on the way. He "retired" from Mississippi Chemical in 1991.

Triggs, still a vice president of Mississippi Chemical, has served as chairman of the Foreign Mission Board and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. He now is moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship chapter in Mississippi.

Cooper would have liked to be governor of Mississippi but he gave up that ambition to help provide a better life for black people in Mississippi. He and another Mississippi businessman, Leroy Percy of Greenville, joined two black businessmen, Aaron Henry of Clarksdale and Charles Young of Meridian, in resuscitating a bankrupt Head Start program in the state. Both Henry and Young are now members of the Mississippi Legislature.

Cooper was trustee chairman at New Orleans Seminary when the institution moved to its present location. The seminary has almost completed funding for the Owen Cooper Chair of Global Missions. The Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies is under way at William Carey College. A chair is named for Cooper at the Mississippi College School of Law.

McGregor, editor emeritus, Mississippi BAPTIST RECORD, is author of The Thought Occurred to Me.

TOP NEWS EVENTS OF 1992

selected from the pages of *The Baptist Record* by the editorial staff



1. Keith Parks retires from FMB; accepts CBF job.
2. Morris Chapman elected as SBC Executive Director.
3. ACTS and VISN merge satellite programming.
4. WMU opens dialogues with FMB, HMB.
5. SBC controversy continues.
6. Southern Baptists respond to starvation in Africa.
7. Joel Gregory resigns from First Church, Dallas.
8. SBC orders Freemasonry study.
9. Cecil Sherman elected as CBF president.
10. Multi-million dollar FMB bequest withdrawn.



1. Mississippi Baptists respond to natural disasters.
2. Mississippi River Ministry promises hope to needy.
3. Clarke College is closed; campaign to reopen fails.
4. Mississippi/Zimbabwe Partnership pays dividends.
5. Mississippi BSU members minister in Russia.
6. Anti-lottery forces lose in close statewide vote.
7. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship organizes in state.
8. Volunteer missions answer call across U.S., world.
9. Group moves to strip *The Baptist Record* subsidy.
10. Mississippians react to election of Bill Clinton.

25 children uncovered in raid on trafficking ring

BOMBAY, India (EP) — Bombay police, following a tip, raided a derelict property in the city and found 25 Bangladeshi children hidden away, according to Evangelism Today. They were just a few of many children caught in a child-trafficking ring, where children are sold to camel stables or as slaves. Some 100,000 children are involved in "slave-type" work throughout India, involving children between the ages of 3 and 15.

"Petrified tiny children are strapped to the hindquarters or under-bellies of camels and their frantic screams cause the camels to run faster. Many children are injured and some even killed in this sordid sport — but the camel races are a lucrative gambling business involving millions of dollars," reported Ron Newby of Global Care, an international children's charity.

Newby was able to arrange the

repatriation of the Bangladeshi children. In Dhaka, Friends of Bangladesh, another children's charity, has been awarded legal custody of the children.

On his return to his home base in the United Kingdom, Newby said, "International efforts must be made by governments to stop this wicked business of child-trafficking, which is on the increase."

United States-based Action International Ministries reports that there are some 100 million street children in the world. They cite that there are 1,900,000 underprivileged and street children in Mexico City, including 240,000 who are abandoned. In Manila, 50,000 to 70,000 children are on the streets, with 15,000 child prostitutes.

Action also stated that there are 50 million children who are working in "slave-type" labor in unsafe and unhealthy conditions around the world.

Clinton church delivers hope in form of program

It was an unusual service in that it began on Saturday afternoon at 3. Buses, vans, and private cars began to unload people who were seldom seen in any church. They came in wheel chairs, blue jeans, and some in second- or may be third-hand clothes.

The Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, was giving a matinee performance of the Singing Christmas Tree and "Behold... the Gift," a powerful drama of the life of Christ, performed by 400 members of the music ministry. Gray Miller directed and Charlenee

Barnette produced the drama of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection.

The church went to the "highways and hedges," plus nursing homes, prisons, the homeless, the hangouts for alcoholics (and the list could continue), to invite people to the service. Jesus would have felt right at home. Gifts and Bibles were given to each person who attended. Dozens responded to the invitation to receive Christ. Without doubt, it was one of the more scriptural services of the Christmas season. — GH

Linda Jackson will manage Jackson Baptist Book Store

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Linda Jackson, manager of the Shreveport, La., Baptist Book Store since 1990, has been named manager of the Jackson, Miss. store, effective Jan. 1. She will succeed Charles McGlocklin, who retired in November.

A native of Birmingham, she

began her career with the national book store chain as an order-filling clerk in 1966. She became a sales clerk in 1971, and promoted to office supervisor in 1976. In 1977, she became sales supervisor.

She and her husband, Buddy, are the parents of three sons.

Southeastern Seminary taps Bethel education professor

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP) — Trustees of Southeastern Seminary named Edward A. Buchanan of Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. to become the second of two education professors at Southeastern.

Elected by trustees in March of 1991, Buchanan will join Southeastern's faculty as the sixth professor hired during President Paige Patterson's administration.

"We are elated that Dr. Buchanan is coming to Southeastern," Patterson said, "because he brings to the task a rare mixture of seasoned experience and aggressive ingenu-

ity for putting new ideas to work in constructive ways."

Patterson said Buchanan declined to accept the position in 1991 due to "personal reasons involving his children's education. But since he was already elected, we felt it appropriate to ask him to reconsider the trustees' offer, and we are delighted that God has given Dr. Buchanan the freedom to minister at Southeastern."

Buchanan has been professor of education/director of continuing education at Bethel Seminary since 1978 and will begin teaching at Southeastern in August of 1993.

Thursday, December 31, 1992

BAPTIST RECORD PAGES



State pastors travel to Illinois

Fifteen pastors from Lowndes, Oktibbeha, and Clay Associations, went to Peoria, Ill. during Oct. 23-30, to conduct a simultaneous revival crusade. Pictured, left to right, front row, are Tommy Whaley, Bob Brandon, Walter Frederick (team leader), Jimmy Walker, Randle

Poss, Bobby Cobb; back row, Terry Partin, Jim Cooper, David Grisham, David Brooks, Marion Dees, Ben McDaniel, Leslie Dodson, and Bill Franks. Not pictured is Edward Knox.

Networks agree on standards to reduce television violence

WASHINGTON (ABP) — Three major TV networks — ABC, CBS, and NBC — have agreed to work together to limit televised violence, according to an Illinois senator whose legislation allowed the networks to work together on the problem.

The results of the joint standards on TV violence probably will show up in programming for the fall of 1993, said Sen. Paul Simon, D-Ill., who facilitated the joint agreement.

At a Dec. 11 press conference, Simon also announced that the three networks are calling an industrywide conference in Los Angeles next spring to discuss TV violence further. A representative of the motion picture industry has agreed to participate in the meeting, Simon added.

Simon sponsored a bill that temporarily exempts the television industry from antitrust laws, allowing the three networks to work together on the problem of program violence. His bill — the Television Violence Act — called

for self-regulation, not censorship, Simon said.

According to the broad standards, all depictions of violence should be relevant to the development of the characters, theme, or plot.

The standards also would prohibit:

- Gratuitous, excessive, or redundant violence;
- Glamorous depictions of violence;
- Scenes showing excessive gore, pain, or physical suffering;
- Scenes depicting uses of force that "on the whole" are inappropriate for a home viewing medium;
- Replicable or unique methods of inflicting pain;
- Portrayals of dangerous behavior that invite imitation;
- Realistic portrayals of violence in children's programs;
- Portrayals of violence used to shock the audience; and
- Gratuitous depiction of animal abuse.

The standards also encourage

portraying the consequences of violence and scheduling all programs with regard for the likely makeup of the audience. The agreement also urges caution in depicting children as victims and the mixture of sex and violence.

A statement released by the networks said these standards are consistent with each network's long-standing policies on violence but now will be set forth in a more detailed and explanatory manner. The networks also said the standards are not intended to inhibit the creative process.

"A free society can solve its problems without government censorship," Simon said. "We are moving toward a solution of this one."

"We imitate what we see on television and in the movies," he continued. "The movie and television industries have made an impact by dramatically reducing the numbers of heroes and heroines who smoke and drink excessively. Now a second step forward can be made by deglamourizing violence."

Texas church takes singing tree behind bars

DALLAS (BP) — With a helping hand from three sister churches and the cooperation of a Southern Baptist chaplain, the music ministry of Baylor Church, Ennis, Texas, took its "living Christmas tree" behind the high walls and steel bars of the Beto II state prison unit near Palestine, Texas.

Several prison trustees joined choir members and a 13-man sound and lighting crew in erecting the 26-foot, tree-shaped stage inside the Texas Department of

Corrections facility. A 48-voice choir performed twice at the prison Dec. 6 for a combined audience of about 500 inmates and guards.

The idea of taking the singing Christmas tree into a prison was proposed in 1990 when the "tree" was built in the sanctuary at Baylor Baptist and the choir performed on it the first time.

"I'd love for you to do this in a prison sometime," Don Dennis, prison MasterLife leader and then pastor of Shawnee Church, Ennis,

told Michael Ryer, minister of music at Baylor Baptist.

"Find us a prison that'll let us take two weeks to build it, and we'll talk about it," Ryer said, reflecting on the difficulties the crew experienced in building the stage.

But last year, having erected the "tree" successfully once, the crew took only a day and a half putting the unusual stage together. Ryer decided perhaps the ministry could be taken inside prison walls after all.



Sheriff of Lawrence County, Duane "Doc" Bradford is also one of only a few bivocational ministers in Mississippi whose careers outside the ministry lie in law enforcement. Though some may find the sheriff-preacher combination curious, Bradford finds it a natural combination for ministering to hurting people. (Photo by Shannon T. Simpson)

Activists planning first of many protests during Clinton inaugural day festivities

By Tom Strode

WASHINGTON (BP)—Randall Terry, the controversial founder of Operation Rescue, and other Christian activists plan to protest publicly President-elect Bill Clinton's policies from the first day of his administration.

Activists are targeting Clinton's Jan. 20 inauguration and his first full day in office, Jan. 21, for public demonstration and prayer. Organizers are expecting about 500 persons to participate in demonstrations and prayer on inaugural day and are calling on Christian leaders to pray in front of the White House on Clinton's first morning in residence, an action which could result in their arrest.

"We want to set the tone on the very first day of Mr. Clinton's presidency: 'Here we are; we're not going to compromise,'" said Patrick Mahoney, director of the Christian Defense Coalition, at a recent press conference.

They are saying to Clinton, "read our lips," Terry said. "We will be there to confront you. We will be there to resist you every step of the way as you resist and rebel against the commands of almighty God."

Other activities planned include prayer in front of a Washington, D.C., abortion clinic Jan. 22, the 20th anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, and a rescue at an abortion clinic Jan. 23.

While the activities will be public, the activists will not block roads for such events as the inaugural parade and will not seek to prevent persons from speaking, Mahoney said.

A challenge to the president-elect not to be sworn in on the Bible can be expected, Terry said.

Their message will be, Terry

said, "Gov. Clinton, do not mock God, do not put your hand on the sacred Bible that condemns homosexuality, that says no to fornication, that says no to adultery, that says no to homosexuality."

It has been announced Billy Graham will deliver the invocation and benediction at the inauguration. The world-famous evangelist is a member of First Church in Dallas.

Clinton is a member of Immanuel Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in Little Rock, Ark.

Mahoney and Terry hope "A Call to Resistance," the title of the Jan. 19-23 campaign, signals the start of a new resistance movement which will lead to spiritual and cultural reformation. Though both remain identified closely with the rescue movement, they are not officially leaders in Operation Rescue National, which is conducting the Jan. 23 rescue.

The plans to protest Clinton's support of abortion and homosexual rights were made in spite of the president-elect's threat to use the authority of his office against Operation Rescue and others who practice civil disobedience to prevent abortions. In a fund-raising letter during the campaign, Clinton said as president he would "move against the anti-choice extremists who have blockaded family planning clinics." He specifically mentioned Operation Rescue.

Mahoney agreed he and other activists are radical but said, "What happens to us today will happen to mainstream Christendom three to five years down the road. Clinton will not just move against us. He'll move against all free religious expression."

When Christian leaders pray in front of the White House on a Pennsylvania Avenue sidewalk

Minister/sheriff puts Word to work while juggling church, law careers

By Shannon T. Simpson

"...For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain" (Romans 13:4).

These words of Romans 13 are found on the letterhead and business cards as testimony to the faith of an unusual bivocational minister, Duane R. "Doc" Bradford, sheriff of Lawrence County.

Bradford is one of only two known bivocational ministers in the state whose careers outside the ministry are in law enforcement. (The other is James Ralph Mitchell of Pontotoc, ordained minister and Mississippi state trooper, and son of J.C. Mitchell, director of missions in Clay, Oktibbeha, and Lowndes counties).

When asked how most people react to the combination of sheriff and preacher, Bradford responds: "God can use you anywhere. All the hurt I see, he lets me minister to folks in this office."

Bradford was elected Lawrence County sheriff in 1991, after a 20-year career with the Jackson Police Department. Originally from Simpson County, he was a virtual stranger to the 12,500 residents of Lawrence County. Despite his status as an unknown, and the fact that one of his opponents in the sheriff's race was the incumbent of many years, he was elected to the office. He is convinced God put him there for a reason. "God put it every bit together. I couldn't have (planned) it for me to be here. God put it on these people's hearts to vote for me," he says. "Nobody even knew me. But they are fine folks, a lot of good Christian people."

His call to preach, he says, came shortly after being saved Oct. 12, 1982. On that date, he had already been a deacon at Timberlawn Church, Jackson, for two years. He says he thought he was a Christian, but wasn't.

"My wife Wanda and I joined the church because we were on the verge of getting a divorce, and church was the last straw. I didn't go to find the Lord. I just didn't want to lose my house and kids," Bradford recalls. "I had no idea what 'saved' meant. We both said we were saved. But we were just playing at church."

When he was called to preach, he remembers feeling "something just nagging and pulling at me. God wasn't finished dealing with me yet."

"I never thought about being a preacher, because I was so nervous about talking in front of people. But I have the best time getting up and telling people how God changed my life."

"There's nothing I haven't done," said Bradford, when asked about those life changes. "At Co-Lin (Copiah-Lincoln Community Col-

lege), they kicked me out twice for drinking and carousing. After I joined the Jackson Police Department, I was a terrible person. If someone crossed me, I'd beat them up. As a rookie, I had to 'prove myself' to the rest of the department — how I could cuss, be tough, etc.

"When I moved to the vice and narcotics squad as a plain clothes officer, I'd go out and get drunk, come home drunk.... I lived in mess like that."

"I've quit all that wild stuff," Bradford says. "The change Christ made in me was so real. I have a new life; he let me start really living.... But I fail him miserably every day. I still have a temper."

Bradford was ordained Sept. 27, 1987 at Hopewell Church, Copiah County, only a mile away from where his 16-year-old daughter, Stacie, was later killed in a car accident.

At the time of Stacie's death in 1990, Bradford was pastor at Palestine Church, Harrisville. That year, 50 people were saved in the congregation, including an 82-year-old deacon.

"Those were fine folks," Bradford says. "They just wrapped their arms around us when Stacie was killed."

Though his daughter's death was tragic, he said he is sure he will meet her again in heaven. He recalled praying with her the night she was saved.

His son Garrett, now 13, has since become a Christian, and is active in the youth group at Newhebron Church, Newhebron, where the Bradfords are members.

"There is nothing greater than knowing we're all going to be together in heaven. I'm going to see Stacie again, and I know my wife and son are going with me," he says. "Nothing's better than seeing your family saved."

Bradford praised the people he said have helped him in his walk with the Lord: his brother-in-law, David Raddin, pastor of First, Yazoo City; Charles Davis, pastor at Hopewell; Davis' son, Chuck, pastor at Davis Road Church in Jackson; "...and my wife. If you don't write anything else, you write about how she encourages me. She is so strong," Bradford said.

Charles Davis, pastor at Newhebron, says Bradford is out preaching so much, he has hardly had time to get to know him. "It's been a brief acquaintance, but a good relationship," says Davis. "I hear he's an excellent preacher and singer."

Bradford says he would not have the time as sheriff to pastor a church full-time, and he never thought of giving up law enforcement, even though "in general, it's discouraging. People talk about winning the war on drugs, etc., but I've got news for them. You're never going to win that war — that's just the way of the world. But I promised God to be a witness for him in this office. These people in jail need an experience with Christ. If they had one, we wouldn't ever see them again."



State wins national award

NASHVILLE — Mose Dangerfield (right), director of Discipleship Training Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, received an award from Roy Edgemont, director of the Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division, during December planning meetings in Nashville. Mississippi was cited for 1992 leadership in Youth Bible Drill participants with 1,045. Dangerfield was also elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention Fellowship of State Directors of Discipleship Training at their recent meeting at the Sunday School Board in Nashville. (Photo by Jim Veneman)



Letters to the editor

Won't cast first stone

Editor:

In regards to recent reports and letters, in the Record, I feel the urge to sound off as well. I agree with the resolution asking that our new leaders reverse their reported stance on abortion and homosexuals in the military services. I too, as Mr. Voss stated, feel that the amendment was not required, but don't see it as a major problem.

I was somewhat amused by the move to cut funding for the Record, disguised as a pious attempt to use that money for greater causes. Apparently the messengers viewed it in that same manner, as the tactic has been used in almost every church with which I am familiar. Many needed mission works, and not a few benevolent causes, have been killed in this manner. We need Baptist press people who will stand up and be counted, whether we agree or disagree with them! Are we such crybabies that we want to suppress an offensive editorial, when all we have to do is write the editor a rebuttal letter? Keep hounding us to keep us on our toes, please.

Of much greater concern is the suggested expulsion of the president-elect from his church for his reported views. If those advocating this action are Democrats, I applaud their spunk and respect their suggestion. If they are Republicans, I say how dare they attempt to cause disruption under the guise of restoring purity to our churches. Only they and God know their motives. 1 Thessalonians 5:22 states: "Abstain from every appearance of evil." I am aware that Paul directed expulsion for some extreme deliberate sins, but where do we find instructions as to ridding our ranks of all blatant, unrepentant sinners, as opposed to pulling out tares?

As for me, I choose to live with these "sinners or inferior Christians" rather than risk guilt in casting the first stone. For those who feel they are so pure as to be qualified "as superior Christians," please don't seek my help. 1 John 1:8-10 and Matthew 7:1-5 have put a fear in me such that I shudder at the very thought of judging, or executing a judgment thus advocated.

Donald R. Windham
Carriere

Pastors also called

Editor:

Today I received my new issue of *The Commission* and under "Meet Your New Missionaries," I found the faces of some friends. My heart rejoices with them as they step forward into this high calling and yet at the same time I cannot help feeling a bit envious — our faces should have been there, too.

It was a year and a half ago that we met this couple at Ridgecrest's Jericho (a Southern Baptist missions festival). Both of us were struggling with the call of missions. Might the commitment to

follow God anywhere mean leaving family, home, and friends to go to a foreign land where we knew no one? For our new friends, the answer was yes. Due to a medical complication, our answer was no... or was it? Where do we get the idea that foreign missionaries are a cut above the rest of us? That their calling is nobler? Indeed they sacrifice a lot to follow God. But don't we?

My husband is a pastor. Currently he is without a church, working a secular job. We almost bought a home and settled down; something we've always wanted. But God keeps calling, and I know we will return to the full-time pastorate. So, on behalf of all the pastors out there let me say a few words: We, too, leave our family, friends, and home to follow God's call. We deny ourselves the security of our own home to live among the strangers we are called to serve. We, too, fight the devil on a daily basis who is sometimes disguised as a church member. Unlike foreign missionaries, we get no furlough, no medical coverage, and no financial security. Though we do speak the language of our people, it still takes time to understand their ways and customs. We are the outsiders. All you have to do is turn on the TV to realize the United States of America is a vast mission field ripe unto harvest but the laborers are few.

Are foreign missionaries a cut above the rest of us? Do pastors in the states have the higher calling? Neither. We are both called to a specific task and are merely obedient to the Master. God requires no more and expects no less.

Name withheld

Praises Baptist school

Editor:

When I was a child the school day began with announcements; the pledge of allegiance to our "one nation under God;" all athletic and special events began with prayer; each Friday we were offered Bible studies and Scripture memorization class.

This is in America's public school system.

Today, my child begins school with announcements; the pledge of allegiance to our "one nation under God;" all athletic and special events begin with prayer; each day she is offered Bible study and Scripture memorization in class.

This at Woodland Hills Baptist Academy in Jackson; NOT, however, in America's public school system — where violence is rampant; prayer is disallowed; and Bible lessons, Scripture memorization classes, and discipline are things of the past.

W.H.B.A. students are loving; a caring community of believers who have a working faith in God; and just as importantly, are receiving a quality, excellent education in an environment free of violence, abusive language, amoral sex (in all its forms), drug abuse (including tobacco and alcohol), and the fear that pervades public school.

At Woodland Hills Baptist Academy, students see the love of God; share the peace of Christ; study under the conviction and movement of the Holy Spirit who teaches by example in the lives of the faculty and staff of W.H.B.A. what it means to be a Christian (not just Baptist) in today's world. (In the world, yet apart from the

world — not of the world.)

I am concerned for the future of America, and my children's future. Sending them to W.H.B.A. is the only way I know of assuring that they are taught in an environment that, when I was growing up, was available to all children, but is no more in the public school system.

Jesus said, "Suffer the little chil-

dren to come unto me," and Woodland Hills Baptist Academy (far from being closed, burned down, or out of business) is doing just that for today and for the future, to the glory of God Almighty.

Gene Damoth
Jackson

Seminary student leaders object to trustee actions

By Mark Wingfield

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) — Nine leaders of student organizations at Southern Seminary have sent an open letter to seminary trustees in which they object to "excessive expenditures," "secretive meetings," and "continual upheaval" caused by investigations of professor Paul Simmons.

Simmons, professor of Christian ethics, has been under scrutiny by trustees for several years primarily because of his views on abortion rights. However, Simmons' supporters have maintained the tenured professor has taught within the seminary's doctrinal guidelines.

Trustees met in a special session Dec. 15 to consider a proposal that would have paid Simmons up to \$362,000 to sever his relationship with the Louisville, Ky., school. That proposal, brought by trustee leaders, was rejected on a 21-34 vote.

That meeting and previous actions related to Simmons are the focus of the Dec. 17 student letter,

signed by leaders of the student government and other campus organizations.

The letter implies that trustees have squandered the contributions of grass-roots Baptists to pursue action against Simmons — against the advice of two attorneys — and "demand(s) accountability of the board for these excessive expenditures and continual disruptions."

The letter claims trustees paid \$10,000 for legal counsel which advised them not to pursue dismissing Simmons, then paid another \$10,000 to \$50,000 for a second legal opinion that told them the same thing.

The letter notes that trustees have increased the number of their business meetings from one to two per year and, because of the Simmons matter, called several extra meetings of the academic personnel committee.

"Each meeting costs the seminary the expenses of the meeting and travel costs for each member," the signers explain.

Further, the letter claims the special meeting held Dec. 15 in Atlanta cost the seminary at least \$25,000.

Seminary officials have declined previous requests by reporters to tell the cost of the legal opinions or the special meeting. The trustees' twice-a-year regular meetings reportedly cost about \$35,000 each.

Most of the sessions dealing with Simmons have been held in executive session with no reporters or observers present.

The "secretive" nature of these meetings does not build trust with students, the letter continues. "If the board is serious about student concerns, and if they hope to have a healthy, candid relationship with the seminary community, they must exhibit candor themselves.

"Meetings such as the one on Dec. 15 serve to further alienate many members of the seminary community," the students say.

Wingfield is news director, Kentucky WESTERN RECORDER.

Rumors resurface of Procter & Gamble link to church of Satan

ATLANTA (BP) — False information linking Procter and Gamble with the occult has been distributed with unauthorized copies of a Home Mission Board brochure, said Gary Leazer, director of the HMB interfaith witness department.

"The Home Mission Board is not responsible for this flier," Leazer said. He became aware of the publication when he received a copy of the flier from Procter and Gamble.

The copyrighted belief bulletin about the occult has been printed on one side of a flier, with a "notice" about Procter and Gamble on the other side, Leazer said.

The flier claims that the president of Procter and Gamble appeared on the Phil Donahue show in March and said a large portion of the company's profits benefit the church of Satan.

"No officer of Procter and Gamble has ever appeared on the Donahue show for any reason, and there is absolutely no connection between our company and this church of Satan," Joseph Suarez,

legal counsel for Procter and Gamble wrote in a November letter to Leazer.

In addition to calling for a boycott of Procter and Gamble products, the notice claims that a sym-

bol used by Procter and Gamble can form the number 666.

Last year the company won a \$75,000 judgment against a couple who made similar accusations, Leazer said.

FMB: Most urgent need is still for church planters

In 1993 the great majority of personnel requests for career missionaries is for general evangelists or church starters. Missionaries around the world have asked for 271 people to join them in the vital work of evangelism that results in churches. Seventy-seven additional people are needed for development of the churches.

Pastors, assistant pastors, ministers of evangelism, church planters, and other church staff personnel will fill most of these jobs. Most will have seminary training and at least two years' experience in a church or home mission area. Some openings

exist for those with many years in pastoral ministry, a college degree, and at least a year of seminary.

Many of these requests for church planting and church development can be filled by single or married women who have experience in evangelism and church development. These women will follow in the steps of Lottie Moon who taught and proclaimed God's Word, won people to Christ, and helped begin churches.

For more information, contact the Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767, phone (804) 353-0151.

Reflections on going "back home"

By Ed Sudduth

"Home" has special meaning this particular time of the year. Ed Sudduth, a master musician catches a glimpse of it that will cause all of us to remember. Sudduth is presently minister of music in Augusta, Ga. at National Hills Church.

I have often heard it said, "you can never go back home." And to some degree, this is true. However, it was my joy and privilege to go "back home" and participate in the 125th anniversary celebration of my "home church," First Baptist Church, Durant. Durant is a small town, nestled in the sand hills of Holmes County in central Mississippi, approximately 50 miles north of Jackson. This is where I was "born and raised."

I am proud of my roots, and I still remember those "dear hearts and gentle people" who lived in my hometown as I was growing up in the '40s and '50s. These were the folks who knew me, loved me, taught me, and nurtured me from July 17, 1938 when I first "discovered America" until I left for college in the late 50s. In fact, the standard statement of the late Dr. J.W. Howell who "delivered me" on that fateful Sunday morning was, "Well, Edwin, you were born on Sunday morning at Sunday School time, and you've been in Sunday School ever since." And

that is so true.

On Saturday afternoon, it was delightful to ride and remember, to visit over town with neighbors and friends of former years. Once again, I was able to play on the beautiful old pipe organ at the Durant Methodist Church and to remember the sights and sounds as my music teacher, the late Madge Lipsey O'Cain had played it for so many years. Once again, I experienced a sense of awe in the presence of the Lord as I worshipped Him while standing on "Holy Ground."

On Sunday morning as I looked out over the full congregation in the Durant First Baptist Church there were so many vacant places, though every pew was filled to capacity with chairs in the aisles. The pew near the back in the center section where my beloved parents always sat seemed strangely empty. They, along with so many other saints of God, are now in his presence, and have joined the "great cloud of witnesses" cheering on those of us left in this realm to continue running faithfully in the race, which for them is now complete.

Durell Makamson, one of the former pastors, was back and brought a challenging and most timely message.

A highlight of the day was the

joyful reunion with Jim Hayes who had served as minister of music at the church during my formative years. Though, now retired from the "active ministry," Jim had a profound influence on my life during those years.

Also returning for the day was Betty Jo McLellan Jones, who had grown up along with me in the '40s and '50s. Together, we had played the organ and piano at the church during most of our school years. For the first time in 41 years, Jim Hayes, Betty M. Jones, and I were the "music team" again for the 11 a.m. service.

Then, there was the sumptuous noon meal served from tables laden with all that good delicious home-cooked food for which Durant has long been famous. This was followed by an afternoon of music and fellowship with friends of former years. It was so heartening to see children, grandchildren, and yes, for some, even great-grandchildren who have "taken up the mantle of service," and are now serving the Lord faithfully.

I thank God for my heritage, for family and friends, both past and present, and for the life and love of the Lord Jesus that make today and every day worth living.

Yes, I am proud of my roots. It was so good to remember. It was so good to go "back home."

RESTAURANT

From page 3

audio cassette counseling tapes for teens — with his own youth group and decided to approach the Stewarts about displaying and giving away the tapes at their restaurant.

Produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board, the cassette tapes feature information and advice from leading Christian counselors on a number of contemporary issues like self-esteem, alcohol abuse, suicide, loneliness, teen-age pregnancy, depression, date rape, and sexual abuse. They can be reproduced free of charge by churches as a ministry outreach to youth and parents of youth.

"I realized the tapes would minister to my kids to a degree but if they were going to be really effective, I had to find a way to get them outside the walls of our church and into the community," Lum said. "I knew the (restaurant) owners were Christians, so I approached them with the idea. Right away they were supportive and encouraging. They realized (displaying the tapes) could be a ministry for them, too."

Lum put up the first display board filled with counseling tapes at The Deck in December 1989. In the last three years, the restaurant has given away more than 2,200 cassettes.

"There are a lot of issues teens wouldn't feel comfortable talking with their mother or father about, but they will take home a tape and listen to it," restaurant co-owner

Joan Stewart said. "And some of the parents are getting tapes for their kids or someone else they know."

"People can't believe they're free for the taking. We've even had people from out of town tell us, 'This is a super idea. I'm going to tell my pastor about it,'" she said.

The display board at the restaurant notes the ministry is sponsored by "First Church Youth Ministry and The Deck," and Lum also included a container of his business cards.

"It has really been good PR for our church because it has let people know that we are concerned about the youth of this community and their problems," he said.

While admitting most restaurants probably wouldn't allow religious products to be displayed in their buildings, Lum said youth ministers should work at developing other creative ways to use the 24-Hour Counselor tapes.

"The tapes can be used as a tool to reach today's kids in a non-threatening way. You can reach them and they don't even know they are being reached," he said.

Three of the four 24-Hour Counselor volumes have been revised with updated statistics and information and featuring recordings by professional recording artists. Two new titles also have been added: "I'm Thinking About Joining a Gang" and "Someone Close to Me has Died."

Hispanic and African-American editions of the product also are available, as are three editions of "Gospel Tract," an audiodrama presentation of the plan of salva-

tion for youth, college students and adults.

The 24-Hour Counselor cassettes may be ordered through Baptist Book Stores or by calling the Sunday School Board's Customer Service Center at 1-800-458-2772.

Alford writes for BSSB.



Education Commission chairmen

Frank Harmon, right, pastor of First Church, Newton, is incoming chairman of the Education Commission. He is pictured presenting a plaque of appreciation to Ron Kirkland, pastor of First, Amory, outgoing chairman. Officers of the Education Commission for 1992-93 are Frank Harmon, chairman; Charles Pickering, vice-president; and Ann Hardy, secretary.

Staff Changes

Bayou View Church, Gulfport, has called Jeff Holeman of Gulfport as interim minister of youth, effective Oct. 19, and Ronald D. Walley Jr. of Hattiesburg as interim minister of music, effective Dec. 21. Holeman's previous place of service was Woolmarket Church. He is a student at New Orleans Seminary. Walley is a native of Ocean Springs and previously served at Seminary Church. He is a student at William Carey College.

Grace Chapel, Aberdeen, has called James R. Hutcherson of Starkville as pastor, effective Dec. 1. His previous place of service was Longview Church, Starkville.

William Keith Fulton has resigned as pastor of County Line Church, Neshoba County. He is a family ministry area coordinator and is available for family ministry weekend revivals, family enrichment conferences, and supply. Fulton can be reached at Rt. 3, Box 225, Philadelphia, MS 39350 or 656-5538.

Michael King a native of West Palm Beach, Fla., is the new pastor at Deer Creek Church, Rolling Fork. He is a graduate of West Atlantic Baptist College, West Palm Beach, Fla. and a recent graduate of Southwestern Seminary.

David Briscoe has accepted a position as editor at the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. Briscoe will be employed in the Adult Section: Life and Work and VBS of the Youth-Adult Department in the Church Growth-Sunday School Division.

Briscoe will begin his work there Jan. 1. He has been pastor of Pelahatchie Church, Pelahatchie. He went to Pelahatchie from New Palestine Church, Picayune. He is a graduate of Clarke College, William Carey College, and New Orleans Seminary.

the 23-28-year-old group, there was a significant increase this year in the 35-45-year-old age group.

— SOUTHERN Seminary's fall enrollment was 1,917 as of Nov. 4. By the semester's end, when all students enrolled in Boyce Bible School off-campus programs are counted, that number is expected to increase to 2,400-2,500. Boyce provides ministerial training for people without college degrees. Last year's overall enrollment was 2,489.

Among enrollment trends: In the past decade, the number of Korean students has increased from eight to 60. There are nine Russian students sponsored by Southern and the Foreign Mission Board attending Boyce Bible School for one year of study.

Also, while the age of the Southern's students continues to be in

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CHURCH PEW CUSHIONS: Manufactured in our plant. For free estimate contact: Emmons Brothers, P.O. Box 186, Meridian, MS 39301. Since 1899. Phone (601) 693-4451.

WANTED: Pineview Baptist Church of Hattiesburg, MS, is interested in purchasing a van or bus, capacity of 15-30. Contact Guy Slade at (601) 544-7391.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES: Full-time minister of youth and children. If interested, send resume to: Pastor, Normandale Baptist Church, P.O. Box 250180, Montgomery, AL 36125-0180.

EXPERIENCED CHURCH PEWS for sale. Light oak stain with red padded seat. Harmony Church, New Albany, (601) 534-5585.

BIG TOP GOSPEL TENTS, all sizes. Open Air Ministries, (318) 939-2239.

POND STOCKERS — Albino and channel catfish, bream, carp. Phone (601) 267-9859.



Linn Hughes was recently licensed to the gospel ministry at Amity Church, Sparta. Pictured are, at left, Walter Butler, pastor; middle, Linn Hughes; and right, his wife, Darlene Hughes.

Maternity benefits boosted in AB Church Medical Plan

DALLAS (BP)—Maternity benefits in the Church and Seminarian Comprehensive Medical Plans will be raised effective Jan. 1, the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention announced today.

The new fixed benefit will be \$5,000 for normal delivery and \$7,500 for cesarean section, said Joel H. Mathis, senior vice president for insurance. Present benefits

are \$3,000 and \$5,000 respectively.

Complications of pregnancy are treated as any other illness, as defined within the parameters of the plan.

Mathis said there will be no waiting period for the new benefit. Any delivery on or after Jan. 1, will qualify.

"We are delighted to pass on to our participants the benefit of better claims experience in the Church Comprehensive Plan," said Mathis. "We announced several weeks ago there would be no increase in rates for the period January through June. It is an added pleasure to announce the larger maternity benefit," he added.

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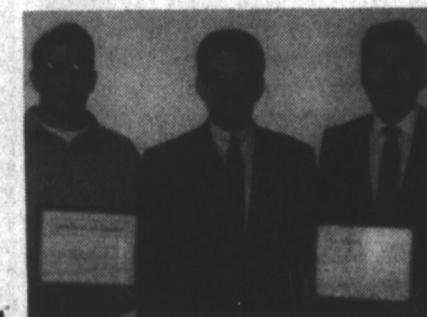
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Anthony Vick (Tony) Dallalio was ordained to the gospel ministry at Washington Church, Washington, Nov. 29. He has accepted the

pastorate of Goldenbrook Church, Muskogee, Okla. Dallalio, a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, is currently attending Southwestern Seminary.

Dallalio

James S. (Jim) Young, minister of music and education, was recently ordained at Calvary Church, West Point. The Batesville native is a graduate of Northwest Mississippi Junior College and the University of Young Southern Mississippi.



Algoma Church, Algoma, recently honored three members for perfect attendance. Pictured, left to right, are Brooks Corder, 2 years; Kourtney, Kollette, and Sue Barlow, 7 years.



Bethany Church, Slat Springs, recently ordained the first deacons in over 26 years. They are Eddie Helms, son of Truett Helms, a deacon, and David Macon, son of J. W. Macon, also a deacon. Pictured, left to right, are Henry Hight, pastor, Helms, and Macon.



Pictured are recent recipients of Sunday School perfect attendance pins at Beulah Church, Newton County, front row, left to right, Donnie Blackwell, 2 years; Karen, Courtney, and Jared Lanier, 1 year; J. R. Chaney, 3 years; Laverne Chaney, 15 years; back row, Mary Ann Motley, 2 years; Joe Motley, 24 years, Annie Bell Motley, 9 years; and Barbara Harrison, 10 years. Not pictured are Will Motley, 15 years, and Neal Motley, 23 years.

RECLAMATION

From page 2

throughout the denomination, must preach and teach with all diligence the following distinctions:

- (1) The historic Baptist belief in the inspiration and authority of the Bible;
- (2) The competence of the individual soul before God;
- (3) The priesthood of all believers in Christ;
- (4) The spiritual/evangelistic mission of the church;
- (5) The practice of congregational church government, with recognition of the rightful place of the laity;
- (6) The servant role of the pastor, who is to be the spiritual leader, not the dictator, of the congregation;
- (7) The missionary tasks of all denominational entities;
- (8) The principle of cooperation in all support systems;
- (9) The person, power, and pres-

ence of the Holy Spirit; and (10) The Lordship of Jesus Christ over the church.

A sustained emphasis upon these basic Baptist beliefs, plus a return to trust based upon love, will lead to the "renewing of our minds," and the altering of non-biblical and non-Baptistic concepts. When enough pastors and lay-leaders recognize the current, disgraceful status of our denomination, and courageously commit themselves to its reclamation, the glory of a great past can be restored.

More than a decade ago, some among us appointed themselves to "save our denomination." While admitting that some changes needed to be made, and some directions needed to be altered, it must be stated in all candor that many efforts to "save us" have almost destroyed us. A candid look at what has happened within the Executive Committee, the Sunday School Board, the Home Mission Board, the Foreign Mission Board, the seminaries, and other boards, agencies and commissions of the

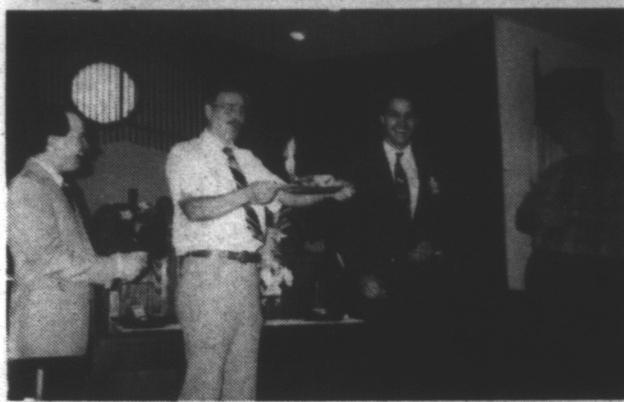
convention, reveal confusion, conflict, a lack of trust, and deterioration.

Whether one is a fundamental/conservative or a moderate/conservative, the time has come for all who love and believe in our denomination, as it has ministered historically and traditionally, to join together in an effort to "save us from our saviors." We do not need continued political struggle until everyone submits to a deadly stalemate. Instead, we need renewal, revival, restoration, and reclamation.

The process of return will not be easy, and the desired results will not come immediately. But, the reclamation of our denomination to a place of integrity in the eyes of the world, and to usefulness in the hands of God, is a worthy goal. The journey back will be long and painful, for the true army of the Lord travels only on its knees.

Moore formerly served as pastor and director of missions in Mississippi. He is now retired and lives in Kosciusko.

Just for the Record



Commission Road Church, Long Beach, burned its mortgage note on Nov. 1. The church, 15 years old, is now debt free. Pictured, left to right, are Steve Rowe, Steve Rogers, J. Greg Martin, pastor, and Earl Cuevas.



Gum Grove Church, Brookhaven, recently held a GA recognition service. The girls who participated in a presentation of the Lottie Moon story are pictured, left to right: front row, Terrie Richardson, Emily Bonnabel, Larissa Dixon; back row, Shea Howard, Rusti Smith, and Jessica Smith.



Highland Church, Crystal Springs, recently held its GA recognition service. Pictured, front row, from left, are Bridgette McManus, Betty Lee McPherson, Megan Pickler, Alicia Schubring, Kay Jones Boone, Shellye Pickler, Ashley Dickerson, Heather Martin; back row, Jessica Greer, Toni Jones Boone, Kasey Nations, Misty McManus, Bethany Windom, Vanessa Pickler. Not pictured are GA leaders Laura Thornton, Ruth Ann Bell, Wanda McManus, and Ann Rials.



Central Church, Brookhaven, recently held a note burning for its new activities building. Pictured, left to right, are John T. Case, trustee; Don Cothorn, chairman of deacons; Earl Foster, trustee; Mrs. J. D. Foster, building committee. Not pictured is Lamar Walls, trustee.



Brotherhood of Ellistown Church, Union County Association, participated in a construction project at Barron River Church, Bowling Green, Ky. Pictured, left to right, first row, are Trey Humphreys, Ed Humphreys Jr., Shane Hope, and Scotty Reed. Second row, Marvin L. Cox, Brotherhood director, Paul Reed, Leon Clark, Larry Coker, Ed Humphreys Sr., Truett Pannell, Neil Roberts. Third row, Randy Hope, pastor, Sid Priest, two Barron River members, Mike Jett, and Mike Campell (Barron River member and overseer for the construction).

KRAFT Foodservice of Jackson awarded a \$3,000 non-restricted grant to The Gleaners, a charity all-volunteer organization. The Gleaners function is focused on the collection and distribution of perishable and prepared foodstuffs to all non-profit shelters and food pantries in greater Jackson. Eddie Bomar is volunteer CEO.

Pineview Church, Hattiesburg, will celebrate its 17th anniversary Jan. 10, beginning with the morning worship at 11 a.m. Bobby Cossey, former pastor, and Tom Lott, former minister of music, will lead the service, followed by dinner on the ground and an afternoon service. Bobby Shurden is pastor; Wade Lott is music minister.

Leaf River Church, Pineville, will host its annual New Year's Eve gospel singing Dec. 31, 7:30 p.m. The Prodigal Quartet will be featured. For further information, contact Tony Chuter at (601) 789-5764.

The deacons of First Church, Cleveland, hosted a banquet honoring the widows of the church on Dec. 4. Deacons and wives were assigned one or two widows each. They contacted each one personally to invite them and also escorted them to the banquet. They were greeted by the church staff and presented a corsage. After a time of fellowship, the deacons served a meal. Fruit baskets were delivered to the homebound widows and nursing home widows. The program consisted of music and a skit presented by the staff. Plans are already made for a repeat in 1993.

First Church, Clara, recently held a recognition service for its Acteens. Recognized were Kelly Moody, Crystal Jones, queen, and Shaun McLain, queen.

Hebron Church, Grenada, will sponsor a street evangelism seminar Jan. 15-16. Aubrey Foster, director of Open Air Ministries, will train workers in the use of sketch board painting, gospel illusions, and object lessons. For more information, call (601) 226-6773.

The Bibletones Quartet, Gospel Echoes, Magnolia State, and the Sims Brothers will be featured in a gospel sing at the Florence High School gym at 7 p.m. Jan. 2. For information, call (601) 924-8504.



"**Around the World In Six Adventures**" was the theme for the GA recognition service on Oct. 14 at Ebenezer Church, Senatobia. Special guest speakers were John and Sarah Perkins, former missionaries to France and he is now director of missions for Northwest Association. GAs receiving badges were Keri Barksdale, 4th grade; Ryan Terell, 2nd grade; Jessica Sanders, 6th grade and GA pendant; Rachael Prince, 4th grade; and Bryn Morgan, 4th grade. GA leaders are Mary Jane Sanders and Kathy Dickerson. Eddie Price is pastor.



Old Oak Grove Church, Myrtle, recently held a GA and Acteen Recognition Service with the theme "God's Beautiful Bouquet." GAs pictured at top, left to right, front row, are Ginger Simmons, level 6; Carol Peters, levels 1 and 2; Amanda Yager, level 5; back row, Lisa Jordan, leader.

Acteens pictured below, front row, are Cindi Dawson, queen; back row, Crystal Kiddy, queen; Deborah Kiddy, leader; and Amanda Roberson, queen.



Calvary, Tupelo, struck by fire

Calvary Church, Tupelo, lost its worship auditorium and the education space beneath it in a fire that struck the building late Dec. 20. Smoke damage was reported in the education wing. The Tupelo Fire Department responded immediately, but was unable to salvage the sanctuary. John Armistead is pastor.

Uniform

We need the Holy Spirit



By Chuck Pourciau
Acts 2:1-7, 12-17a

Just how important is the Holy Spirit? We get an indication of the Spirit's necessity in Acts 1:4 when Jesus told the disciples not to leave Jerusalem to begin the work of spreading the gospel. He told them that they must wait for the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, for only then could they accomplish the great works that God would perform through the church of Acts. The Holy Spirit is the one necessary piece of equipment for any form of ministry. Let's examine what is therefore the most important event in the book of Acts, the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The gift of the Holy Spirit (vv. 1-4). God chose a wonderful time to bestow the gift of the Holy Spirit on the church. The feast of Pentecost took place 50 days after the Passover celebration. It was one of the most popular pilgrim festivals, even more popular than Passover. Therefore, as is indicated in the text (v. 5), Jews from all over the world had gathered in Jerusalem.

The emphasis here is that "all of them" were filled with the Spirit. The gift of the Spirit of God is not reserved for the religious elite, but is intended for all believers. From this point on in Acts, the gift of the Spirit became a normal part of becoming a Christian (2:38; 9:17; 10:44-47). The gift of the Spirit is God's gift to all his people.

The witness of the believers (vv. 5-7). Luke recorded here that Jews "from every nation under heaven" heard the witness of these Spirit-filled believers. And they heard this witness in their own languages. A word needs to be said here concerning the meaning of this speaking in tongues. Some have contended that it was a reference to the ecstatic language Paul dealt with at Corinth, but the evidence of the text does not support this view. In verse 6 it is very clear that these people were hearing the message of God in their own languages and not some unintelligible utterance. It also is clear from 1 Corinthians 14:19 that Paul was dealing there with unintelligible speech. Essentially, on this day of Pentecost, God's people were able to communicate the gospel to those who spoke a different language. That is very different from the phenomenon described by Paul in 1 Corinthians. It was the Holy Spirit that made this communication possible.

God will equip his children to witness for him in any situation. The Holy Spirit and a willing witness are the only required elements in a witnessing encounter. God's people must quit doubting themselves and start having confidence in the power of the Spirit of God.

The responses of the crowd (vv. 12-13). The response of the crowd was neither wholesale acceptance nor complete rejection. Some were amazed and interested while others made fun of them by accusing them of having had too much wine. This same trend continued throughout Acts and Christian history. One can never predict what kind of response will come when he presents the gospel to someone. Yet we as Christians must remember one very important thing. We are not responsible for the response of the one to whom we are witnessing. We are only responsible to present the gospel. Jesus made this point very clear in the Parable of the Sower. We never know how the soil will react, but we must keep sowing the seed.

The boldness of Peter (vv. 14-17a). Peter saw a golden opportunity to present the gospel and took advantage of it. Also, he based his presentation on Scripture. The Christ event was not some "Johnny come lately" change in the plan of God. It was something that had been planned and foretold by his prophets.

What does this tell us today? When we are filled with the Spirit and founded on the Word of God, we can witness with boldness.

How necessary is the Spirit of God? How important is oxygen to the life of a human? Even more important is the Spirit to the life of the church.

Pourciau is pastor, First Church, Louisville.

Bible Book

The Lord of history



By Guy A. Hughes
Psalm 68

One of my favorite hymns is "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Oh, what a blessed thought to know the direction of the wind, the amount of rainfall, and even the number of days the tiny little baby will grow to live, is under the controlling hand of God. Jesus assured us even the falling of a sparrow is under God's watchful eye and the number of hairs upon our head he has counted (Matt. 10:29-30). When all is said and done, everyone in history will proclaim the years have been his story.

God's acts in Israel's history (Psalm 68:7-12). The psalmist knew God was leading history with his hand. He remembered how his ancestors marched through the wilderness from the bondage of the mighty (?) Pharaoh in Egypt to an appointment with the mighty (!) God at Mount Sinai. A most powerful army could not stand against the Lord of history who placed a "babe in the bulrushes" to deliver his people from slavery.

Israel's praise for God's triumph (Psalm 68:19-29). Nestled within this psalm of praise is the promise of our Savior, who we are told "daily loads us with benefits" and "daily bears our burdens." He is the God of our "salvation" who rescues us from a wasted life in a barren wilderness. The Lord of history fulfilled this promise when, under his controlling hand, he directed Augustus to call for a census in Israel, making it possible for a baby to be born in Bethlehem instead of Nazareth as the prophet Micah foretold (Micah 5:2). Indeed God proved himself the Lord of history as he moved again in Israel's history to place a "babe in the manger" to give us our Savior, Jesus.

The nation's praise of God (Psalm 68:34-35). King David knew full well who rules and reigns. His "excellency," our "majesty," is over all. His hand of power upholds us and gives strength to live each day. Any power a man might feel he possesses originates from God. Even the nations and kingdoms of the world derive their power from God (Jer. 18:5-10). In Psalm 103:19 David writes, "The Lord has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all."

Praise for forgiveness of sin (Psalm 103:6-12). Just as God sent Moses to deliver Israel from the oppression of Pharaoh, he sent Jesus to deliver us from the bondage of sin. God will always use his power to accomplish good. His enemies plot harm but all things, including evil, he will work together for the good of those called by him. Like Joseph we can proclaim, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Genesis 50:20).

As Jesus hung from the cross suspended between heaven and earth, Satan intended it for evil but God used it for good, the saving of many lives. On that day when "our sins were removed as far as the east is from the west" the Lord of history cried out "It is finished!" but God knew his story had just begun.

During the post-holiday period, many suffer from depression and fear as they face a new year and the prospect of living life without purpose or meaning. Our existence only has significance as we relate to the Lord of history, Jesus Christ. Because God has been active in our past and is busy in our present, we can look forward to a dynamic future. May we echo with certainty the modern day psalmists, Bill and Gloria Gaither who wrote, "Because he lives I can face tomorrow; Because he lives all fear is gone; Because I know he holds the future, And life is worth the living just because he lives."

Hughes is pastor, Friendship Church, Grenada.

Life and Work

The path of obedience



By Laura Russell
Genesis 12:1-9

Sometimes it's hard to know where God is leading us. We tend to prefer a predictable and comfortable lifestyle. Our way is to avoid taking chances. However, this is not God's way. His way is to do things that compel us to put our faith and trust in him. This week's lesson shows how Abram put his faith in God, believing God would lead the way.

God calls Abram (v. 1). Abram was called from his secure environment of family and friends, and from his native land. Abram's kinsmen and his father's house were a constant temptation to him. If he continued to live there he would certainly be affected by his surroundings. Therefore, Abram's leaving was a trial of his faith and obedience as well as a necessary step to separate him from idolatrous influences.

Abram trusted God with an unquestioning faith. He knew not where God was leading him, yet Abram believed that God's blessing would make up for all he could lose or leave behind.

God promises to bless Abram (vv. 2-3). God promised Abram that his name would become great, that he and his people would have an established identity, and that they would be an influence on the rest of the world. Not only was Abram called to leave his own country and heritage to go to a new land and make a new beginning, he was also called to be the instrument for God's redemptive work in the world. God declared this by telling Abram, "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (v. 3). In calling Abram to be the head of a new race God had a specific purpose. This chosen race was to be God's special people.

Abram responds to God's call (vv. 4-6). Once Abram decided to obey God's call, he wasted no time in starting his journey. He was 75 years old when he took his wife Sarai, his nephew Lot, all the possessions and servants he had acquired in Haran, and set out for Canaan. He left a highly civilized society to enter Canaan where he lived in a tent among the barbarians and heathen.

Abram put all his energy into following God's leading. Nothing was going to stop him from his appointed purpose. However, Abram didn't have a map of his future travels. He was to go by faith to "a land which I will show you." He went forth not knowing....

Abram worships God (vv. 7-9). The promise in verse 7 "to your descendants I will give this land" had two meanings. First, it identified Canaan as the land God had promised to the people of Abram for a national homeland. Second, God was declaring his sovereignty. He was the God of that land, and he would take the place of the idol gods being worshiped there.

At each place Abram stopped — Scechem then Bethel — he built an altar to God and worshiped him. This showed Abram's whole-hearted dedication to and dependence on God. In his life, the service and worship of God was always first. Wherever Abram pitched his tent, he built an altar to worship God. Wherever God leads us to "pitch our tents" in 1993, may we have the faith and obedience of Abram to follow, and his communion with God to remember to build an altar and worship.

Russell is a member of First Church, Brandon.



capsules

ACTOR, PLAYWRIGHT RAGAN COURTNEY TO LEAD BSSB WORSHIP DRAMA FOCUS: NASHVILLE (BP) — Ragan Courtney, free-lance actor, producer, playwright, and lyricist, will join the Baptist Sunday School Board's church music ministries department Feb. 1 in the newly created position of worship drama consultant. A long-time Southern Baptist Christian artist, Courtney, 51, is known for his performances in theater as well as his drama workshops. He has been a conference leader at Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Centers for more than two decades.

CLC'S COUNSEL RESIGNS ABA OVER ITS PRO-ABORTION STANCE: WASHINGTON (BP) — The general counsel of the Christian Life Commission recently resigned as a member of the American Bar Association in protest of an abortion rights resolution adopted by the ABA in August. The Christian Life Commission "cannot in good conscience pay dues to the ABA to help fund its advocacy in public policy against values which we hold most dear," Michael Whitehead said in a letter informing the ABA of his resignation. "We will let Southern Baptists know of our decision, and we expect that many lawyers in SBC churches and other churches will decide to follow the same course." Just short of 3,500 members had left the ABA because of the resolution as of Dec. 1, a spokesperson for the largest lawyer organization in the country said. The ABA had more than 368,500 members at the end of September, the spokesperson said.

EVANGELISM LEADERS TARGET SCHOOLS FOR CHRISTIAN CLUBS: SALT LAKE CITY (BP) — Christian clubs are mushrooming in secondary schools in Arkansas and Texas, say Southern Baptist evangelism leaders from those states. Randy Brantley, associate director of evangelism for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention, said more than 100 of the 459 secondary schools in his state have Christian clubs. "The Christian club movement is taking off," Brantley said during a national meeting for Southern Baptist coordinators of youth evangelism events. "God is doing a tremendous thing." Chuck Flowers, youth evangelism associate for the Baptist General Convention of Texas, said at least 500 secondary schools in Texas have active Christian clubs. His goal is for each of the 1,500-plus secondary schools in Texas to have a Christian organization. Club meetings take different formats because each is student-led. The club at Jonesboro (Ark.) High School meets every Friday before school. An average of 50 people come to the meeting to pray for their non-Christian peers, Brantley said. Dean Finley, youth evangelism specialist for the Home Mission Board, said Christian student clubs must maintain their evangelistic zeal. "If they get turned toward themselves, they run out of steam pretty quickly. They must be outward focused." Both Brantley and Flowers encourage students to form groups of three. Each of the three Christians is challenged to pray for and build relationships with three students who are not Christians. The goal is that by the end of the school year, the Christians will have an opportunity to share their faith with the students they have identified.

Devotional...

A special Christmas gift

By Indy Whitten

Missions was the total emphasis of the Sunday morning worship service of the Richton Baptist Church on December 13.

There was a "March for Missions", in which representatives of different church departments came forward to bring their Lottie Moon Christmas offerings. Eddie Wilhite, youth/music director, and his wife, Andi, sang a duet entitled, "The Greatest Gift."

After a message by visiting missionaries, the invitation was given and Mecklyn Morgan came forward. Pastor John Allen talked at length with Mecklyn, visibly moved by her coming. He turned to the Morgan family on the front row and suggested that Mecklyn's parents, Don and Jan, and her sister, Melissa (BSU president at Jones Junior College), join them at the front of the church.

There was a "bunch embrace" as tears streamed down their faces.

The pastor explained with great feeling that Mecklyn had come forward to tell the congregation that God was calling her to be a foreign missionary. Her family had participated in missions programs in the United States, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

One of the most touching parts of the experience was to see the congregation press forward to express their joy over Mecklyn's decision.

Her parents said, "We thought this would be the day she would make her decision public." The people of the congregation said, "We've been expecting this."

The Richton Baptist Church gives money and prayers, but their special gift for Christmas 1992 was one of their very own, willing to say, "Here I am, Lord. Send me."

Whitten and her husband, Charles, are volunteer prayer coordinators at MBCB.

Funeral in Ambato...

Missionary to Ecuador experiences death with native Quichua family

By Michael David Sills

Last night I was invited to the house of one of the evangelical indigenous families in San Francisco de los Chibuleos, which is located high in Andes mountains in Ecuador. On the way out to the community we learned that a child had died. She had been sick for one day with a fever and was diagnosed as having the measles. Her fever continued and she died. Last night they were to have a short service in the home and the funeral today.

When we arrived, I saw a shooting star streaking upwards in the sky. The abundance of stars lit up the mountains round about and down in the valley we could see the sparkling lights of Ambato. This is a place of such beauty by day and by night. The freezing wind reminded us that the glacier on top of snow-capped Chimborazo was just over the hill, though now cloaked in darkness.

The home was very crowded when we entered. The house was a simple one on a dirt street, made of homemade blocks, dirt floors sparsely covered with straw, eucalyptus limbs for rafters and a bare electric bulb for light. The first room contained a large, blackened cooking pot which was boiling over with chicha being prepared for the guests.

In the next room was the blanket which held two and a half year old Marta Veronica Masabanda. She was sitting upright wearing her regular clothes and a pink, hand-knitted hat. Her head was tilted to one side and her lifeless eyes and mouth were tightly closed. On her lap was a pair of pants, stuffed with the few clothes which had been hers, and which she would no longer need.

There was a table on which five candles were burning and the remains of many more had hardened. A few dogs roamed around inside, mutts resembling hyenas more than what we would call

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dogs. About 15 people had gathered for the service, some of whom were believers and some who were there for the fiesta. In the indigenous Catholic tradition they always have a drinking fest and usually a dance when a child dies. They believe that the child has become an angel and this is cause for great celebration. Although the parents are believers, they are fairly new in the faith and the old traditions are hard to break.

I sat on a straw-covered block and tried to get it in my mind that the object in the chair was not a doll, it was the body of a human being who had been alive and had played in this very room. I tried to understand how a child can die of measles in this day and time. It occurred to me that if we could have gone back in time 2,000 years, the only difference would have been my clothes and the light bulb. They were living like this, burying babies, and speaking this same Quichua language when Jesus walked the earth. I thought of the words of Jesus to the crowd at Jairus' house that the little girl was not dead, only sleeping. O would to God that I could have uttered those words to those people and taken that precious little one up in my arms. I looked at the red-eyed parents who appeared to be in shock and wondered what to say.

Beside the little girl was a small white casket. It was made of wood and covered with white felt and little shapes cut from brass colored foil, nailed on. It was lined with thin cloth under which I thought I could see newspaper.

Again I felt a surge of anger at such a senseless death. A little girl does not have to die of measles! As tears filled my eyes I thought of the tears of Jesus at the death of Lazarus; senseless because Jesus knew that God did not create us to die. Death is a result of our wicked rebellion against him.

I still grieve over the events of the past two days, with anxiety over the well-being of the people, and share with them a concern over the religious persecution and consider how God would have me to react. I am humbled in the dust that he has called and allowed me to serve these people. May he use me to spend my life with his dear Quichua people, by his grace and for his glory.

Sills is a missionary serving in Ecuador. He pastored a church in Jackson prior to going to the mission f.

My anger waned as I thought of little Marta stepping from such abject poverty into the unspeakable glories of heaven. I thought of her little body yielding to the raging fever and her next sensation being the perfect bliss of paradise. As we gathered for the service, I thought of Jesus being present and of her in his arms.

At the service they sang four or five evangelical songs in Quichua and then we had a short funeral message. I was requested to use my car as the hearse and lead the procession. I carried Marta's body, her mother and father, and her brother and sister rode in my car while everyone else walked behind.

When we got to the community cemetery the small casket was placed in the hole and the filling in of the dirt was carried out while we stood and watched. The mother and several others took up a song in Quichua which was like a chant, or a dirge, with heart-breaking sobs.

I began to ask a larger question than how a little girl dies of measles in this day and about these people who have lived such hard lives and buried so many family members — babies, brothers, sisters, husbands, and wives. How could they be so full of life, emotion, and heart? I have seen adults laugh with one another like school kids, and I have seen them weep until they are empty.

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